

# VOTING INFORMATION NEWS

A roundup of voting news from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) 3 3 For voters, potential voters and those who assist voters.

## Faxing Enfranchises

### Technology Helped Make It Count

Modern technology ensured the enfranchisement of thousands of citizens voting under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)* in the November 5, 1996 election. Once again, electronic transmission (faxing) of election materials proved to be a valuable tool in circumventing the time and logistical barriers as well as emergency situations experienced by these citizens.

It's all possible through the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP's) Electronic Transmission Service (ETS) which provides an audit trail and a secure transmission of this alternative procedure. At present, 41 states and territories allow for the electronic transmission of some aspect of the process: requesting registration and a ballot by fax; receiving a blank ballot by fax; and/or returning the voted ballot by fax. Fourteen states allow for faxing of the *voted* ballot to the local election official.

In 1996, 54 states and territories allowed use of this method, many beyond what they normally permit, to help enfranchise Armed Forces personnel involved in *Operation Joint Endeavor* in the Balkans. Many transmissions of election materials to and from this theater of operations were possible through the FVAP's ETS and thanks to the support of long distance carrier AT&T (see **Fax**, pg. 4)

## Working With State and Local Government Officials

### Making the Process Easier For UOCAVA Citizens

In the February issue we talked about the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) objectives for 1997. One of the items discussed was working with state and local officials and legislators to continue the pursuit of legislative initiatives that will make voting easier for citizens voting under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*. Here is a closer look at those initiatives.

Because electoral laws vary widely from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, the FVAP seeks input from and coordinates its efforts directly through state and local election officials, state legislators, and their staff. The following initiatives aimed at simplifying the process are being pursued this year. Other initiatives, relating to unique situations in particular states, are being pursued at the same time.

The general initiatives are:

#### 1 The Need for 45 Day Ballot Transit Time

We ask the states and territories to allow a minimum of 45 days between the date the ballot is mailed to the citizen and the due date by which the citizen must return the voted ballot to the local election official. This would be particularly beneficial for overseas citizens at both civilian and military locations. Allowing for sufficient mail transit time would help avoid resorting to ad hoc arrangements.

#### 1 Use of One Federal Post Card Application for All Elections in a Calendar Year

Currently some states require voters to

submit a separate request for each election or allow use of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) for some elections only. This initiative asks the states to accept one form as a request for registration *and* ballots for all elections in a calendar year.

#### 1 Elimination of Notary Requirements

The National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) of 1993 eliminated notary requirements on all *applications* for voter registration. However, in some cases, some states still require notarization of the ballot return envelope. This procedure can be cumbersome and difficult to obtain as well as quite expensive in some foreign countries. We recommend this requirement be fulfilled by

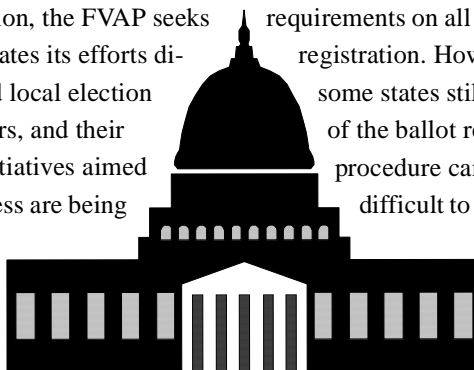
allowing citizens to execute a self-administered oath.

#### 1 Elimination of Not Earlier Than Restrictions (NET restrictions)

Some states will not accept an FPCA request for registration and/or ballot if it is received too early in the calendar year. Many voters are not aware of these "NET restrictions" and submit their FPCA requests without realizing they will not be processed. The FVAP is asking states to remove these restrictions and accept an FPCA at any time during the election year, before the deadline for receipt of the form.

#### 1 Late Registration Alternative

Often the date of discharge and a state's registration requirements combine to disenfranchise a (See **Initiatives**, pg. 2)



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(**Initiatives**, from pg. 1) discharged member of the Armed Forces or a citizen returning home from overseas employment. Allowing these citizens to register past the regular deadline for registration, even on the day of the election, would prevent their disenfranchisement.

#### 1 State Write-In Absentee Ballot

Submariners, Peace Corps volunteers, missionaries and many other citizens stationed in remote locations, unable to receive regular absentee ballots sent in the normal time frame, would be provided with a state write-in absentee ballot in advance of an election allowing them to write in the name of their candidates or party preferences. Unlike the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) which in most states allows voting *for Federal offices only*, the State Special Write-In would provide a *full slate* of offices to be voted upon.

#### 1 Electronic Transmission of Election Materials

While most absentee election materials are successfully sent by mail, legislation providing for this alternate method of transmitting election materials would allow the voter to fax the FPCA for registration and ballot request to the election official. In addition, the local election official could send the blank ballot by fax and accept the voted ballot back from the voter where circumstances would otherwise disenfranchise a voter. Most states currently have some provisions allowing for some aspect of the electronic transmission process.

In 1996, during *Operation Joint Endeavor* in the Balkans, 54 states and territories allowed for the use of this transmission method by members of the Armed Forces serving in this theater of operations, thereby facilitating their enfranchisement.

#### 1 Expanded use of the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

Currently, use of the FWAB is allowed for Federal offices only. Since this ballot is prepositioned overseas, by expanding its use to include special, primary, and runoff elections, citizens would not be disenfranchised because regular ballots are not received in a timely manner.

The FVAP is also asking the states to expand use of the FWAB by accepting it as a simultaneous registration form and voted ballot. Iowa has done this and lessened the administrative responsibilities of their local election officials. This method is also more cost effective and streamlines the process for those voting from overseas. It is important to note that the information requested on the FWAB transmission envelope is the same as the information requested from the voter on the FPCA.

#### 1 Enfranchise Citizens Who Have Never Resided in the US

Approximately 50,000 U.S. citizens who have never resided in the U.S. are not entitled to vote under current law in many states. While they are subject to all other requirements of citizenship, they are not eligible to vote. We are asking for states to allow these citizens to vote where either parent is eligible to vote under UOCAVA.

#### 1 Emergency Authority for Chief Election Official

Granting emergency authority to the chief election official (CEO) in the state or territory would allow the CEO to designate alternate methods for handling absentee ballots in times of a declared emergency.

In addition to the list of initiatives,

(see **Initiatives**, pg. 4)

#### Voting Assistance Officers "To Do" This Month

[ ] Take an inventory of your forms and supplies and place an order for those you need more of. Make sure you have ample supplies of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA, SF-76) for every person you are charged with assisting, including family members. Additional forms and supplies can be requisitioned through your Service Voting Action Officer (listed on page 3 of this newsletter) There are many elections being held in 1997, be prepared!

[ ] Installation Voting Assistance Officers should advise the installation telephone operator of who you are and how you can be reached if a call comes in requesting assistance with voting. Be sure your name is listed under "Voting Assistance" in the installation directory. Unit Voting Assistance Officers should make sure they are listed as the VAO in unit directories.

[ ] Encourage participation in the 1997 Voting Slogan Contest by all UOCAVA citizens. Participants can enter as many entries as they wish. See page 4 for details.

[ ] Make sure you are on the distribution list for FVAP voting news releases and this newsletter. Marilyn Reck of the FVAP (see page 2) is the point of contact for changes to the distribution list.

[ ] This newsletter and FVAP news releases are now available by E-mail.

### Federal Voting Assistance Program

*Voting Information News* provides information for citizens and Voting Assistance Officers and is published monthly by the staff of the Federal Voting Assistance Program.

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Washington, D.C. 20301-1155



#### Phone

(703) 695-0663  
(800) 438-8683  
DSN 225-0663

#### Voting Information Center

(703) 693-6500  
DSN 223-6500



#### Fax

(703) 693-5507



#### Internet

vote@fvap.gov

**YOUR VOTE IS THE ONE THAT MATTERS**



**Note:** Copying or using VIN articles in other publications, etc. is encouraged.

# Guide To State Governors

\* State Holding Gubernatorial Election in 1997

State	Governor	State	Governor
AL	Fob James, Jr. (R)	NV	Robert J. Miller (D)
AK	Tony Knowles (D)	NH	Jeanne Shaheen (D)
AZ	Fife Symington (R)	NJ*	Christine Todd Whitman (R)
AR	Mike Huckabee (R)	NM	Gary E. Johnson (R)
CA	Pete Wilson (R)	NY	George E. Pataki (R)
CO	Roy Romer (D)	NC	James B. Hunt, Jr. (D)
CT	John G. Rowland (R)	ND	Edward T. Schafer (R)
DE	Thomas R. Carper (D)	OH	George Voinovich (R)
FL	Lawton Chiles (D)	OK	Frank Keating (R)
GA	Zell Miller (D)	OR	John A. Kitzhaber (D)
HI	Benjamin J. Cayetano (D)	PA	Tom Ridge (R)
ID	Philip E. Batt (R)	RI	Lincoln Almond (R)
IL	Jim Edgar (R)	SC	David M. Beasley (R)
IN	Frank O'Bannon (D)	SD	William J. Janklow (R)
IA	Terry E. Branstad (R)	TN	Don Sundquist (R)
KS	Bill Graves (R)	TX	George W. Bush, Jr. (R)
KY	Paul E. Patton (D)	UT	Michael O. Leavitt (R)
LA	Mike Foster (R)	VT	Howard Dean, M.D. (D)
ME	Angus S. King, Jr. (I)	VA*	George Allen (R)
MD	Parris N. Glendening (D)	WA	Gary Locke (D)
MA	William F. Weld (R)	WV	Cecil Underwood (R)
MI	John Engler (R)	WI	Tommy G. Thompson (R)
MN	Arne H. Carlson (R)	WY	Jim Geringer (R)
MS	Kirk Fordice (R)	AS	Tauese P. Sunia (D)
MO	Mel Carnahan (D)	GU	Carl T.C. Gutierrez (D)
MT	Marc Racicot (R)	PR	Pedro J. Rosello (D)
NE	E. Benjamin Nelson (D)	VI	Roy L. Schneider, M.D. (R)

## Attention Local Election Officials

## Printing Specifications Available From FVAP

Are you planning on re-stocking your supply of absentee voting materials (absentee ballot mailing envelopes, ballot return envelopes, etc.) this year? Make sure you are using the most up-to-date mailing format and references on all your materials! Accuracy can avoid mail transit delays, thereby helping ensure the enfranchisement of citizens voting under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*.

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) can provide you with printing specifications ("specs") for use when printing materials for use by citizens voting under the *Act*-- active duty members of the Uniformed Services and the merchant marine, their family members, and all overseas citizens.

The materials include size and color guidelines as well as the franking indicia that allows for postage paid mailing of official voting materials to and by these citizens. The most current Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) citation, DMM E080, should appear on all materials since it reflects U.S. Postal Service authorization for mailing, free of postage, to *all UOCAVA citizens*, including those at overseas locations.

For copies of these specs, please contact the FVAP using the contact information listed on page 2 of this newsletter.



### vote@fvap.gov

The FVAP has a new e-mail address effective immediately. Please forward all future electronic correspondence to this new address.

Thank you!

### State Department: Office of American Citizens Services

Voting Action Officer: Ms. Ruth Boettcher tel: (202) 647-9100 (FTS) 8-647-9100, fax: (202) 647-6201

### Service Voting Action Officers

Dept. of the Army: Mr. Tom Feazell tel:(703) 325-4530 (DSN) 221-4530, fax: (703) 325-4532, fax DSN: 221-4532

Dept. of the Navy: Ms. Thelma Jones tel:(703) 614-3248, (DSN) 224-3248, fax: (703) 693-6471

Dept. of the Air Force: Mr. John Lowrance tel:(210) 652-4369 (DSN) 487-4369, fax: (210) 652-5982, fax DSN: 487-5982

Marine Corps: GySgt Elijah Kinton tel:(703) 696-2026 (DSN) 426-2026, fax: (703) 696-2068, fax DSN: 426-2068  
ELMS [GMHP03:HQIHQMC]; Internet:kinton\_jre@mqg-smtp3.usmc.mil; E-mail:kinton@mhp@hqmc

U.S. Coast Guard: LCDR Reggie Sealey tel:(202) 267-2239, fax: (202) 267-4823

Please share this copy of VIN with others.

(**Fax**, from pg.1) who donated fax phone lines and equipment to the region.

Faxing of election materials as an alternative procedure was first implemented, with great success, during the 1990 Congressional election, when the rapid deployment of Armed Forces personnel during *Operation Desert Shield* did not allow these personnel to register or request a ballot prior to deployment. Then, as now, the chief election officials in the country were very supportive of the FVAP's effort and implemented emergency procedures at the local level to facilitate the enfranchisement of these citizens who would otherwise not have been able to vote.

"As in past elections, the response from state and local government officials was very encouraging," stated FVAP Director Phyllis Taylor. "Again this year, it was rewarding to work with such a dedicated group of individuals who make extraordinary efforts in facilitating participation in our democratic process."

(**Initiatives**, from pg. 2) the FVAP is providing each state with suggested legislative language that may be used as a model for drafting legislation specific to each state.

"In 1997, it is important that the FVAP continue working closely with the states and the territories, and provide them with the necessary support to enact these initiatives," stated FVAP Director Phyllis Taylor. She added, "As more citizens are away from their legal residence, it is critical that the effort to simplify the process continues."

In the past, the FVAP has provided the states with legislative and technical assistance as well as testimonial evidence of the purpose and implications of each initiative. For a copy of the letter sent to your state of voting residence, contact the FVAP using the contact information listed on page 2 of this newsletter. You can then contact your state's chief election official using the DoD Voting Information Center and request passage of these initiatives.

## Ombudsman Service

If you cannot resolve your voting concern locally, it's good to know the FVAP is just a phone call away!

### In the U.S. 1-800-438-8683

Antigua	1-800-326-0220
Australia	0014-800-128509
Bahamas	180-995-09-20
Bahrain	800-621
Barbados	800-534-2104
Belgium	078-111-455
Bermuda	800-623-0077
Brazil	000-811-926-5585
Canada	800-995-0920
Chile	00-020-3071
Colombia	980-12-0896
Costa Rica	0-800-011-0125
Denmark	800-10-169
Dominican Rep.	800-751-7131
Finland	9800-156-284
France	0-800-900-156
Germany	013-081-9277
Greece	008-001-22-586
Hong Kong	800-6984
Hungary	00-800-11-158
Ireland	1-800-557-083
Israel	177-102-4012
Italy	1-678-72-444
Indonesia	00-800-1-923-3685

Japan	0031-11-2429
Liechtenstein	1-155-4514
Luxembourg	0-800-2499
Malaysia	800-2170
Mexico	95-800-010-1438
Monaco	0-59-00-156
Netherlands	06-022-2499
Neth. Antilles	001-800-753-0767
New Zealand	0-800-44-0799
Norway	800-12093
Panama	0083-28027-4197
Philippines	1-800-116-0009
Portugal	0501-8-13-035
San Marino	1-678-72-444
Singapore	800-1300-210
South Korea	0078-14-800-0203
Spain	900-93-1108
Sweden	020-793-503
Switzerland	155-4514
Taiwan	0080-10-3153
Thailand	001-800-1-1-923-6685
Trinidad&Tobago	1-800-934-7340
United Kingdom	0-800-895-7403
Uruguay	000-411-923-7985
Vatican City	1678-72-4444

## Submit Your Slogan Contest Entry Today!

There is no limit to the number of entries a participant may submit. Slogans must be typed or legibly hand-written on a regular 8 1/2 x 11 inch sheet of paper.

Please include your full name, (service, if military), mailing

address, daytime telephone number and fax number. Send entries to Federal Voting Assistance Program, Attn: Voting Slogan Contest, The Pentagon, Room 1B457, Washington, DC 20301-1155.

The deadline for submission is **June 30, 1997**. You may also E-mail your entry to:

**vote@fvap.gov**

